



Social Justice in Professional School Counseling

Riley Drake, Sawyer Elementary


Dr. Bengu Erguner-Tekinalp, Drake University



Nice Counselor Syndrome



The purpose of this presentation is to make
you less nice!!!



- Achievement gap
- 

Nice Counselor Syndrome

Personal Factors

- Personal Fear

- Being labeled as trouble maker

- Apathy as coping (avoidant coping)

- Anxiety leading to guilt

- Anger

- Sense of powerlessness

- Personal discomfort

Nice Counselor Syndrome

Professional Factors

Professional Paralysis

“Professional turf”

Administration

Culture of fear

Character assassination strategies

Job Security

The Cure

ASCA Model: mission and goals

DATA!

Do not internalize victimization

Remember the goal

Be aware: catch- stop

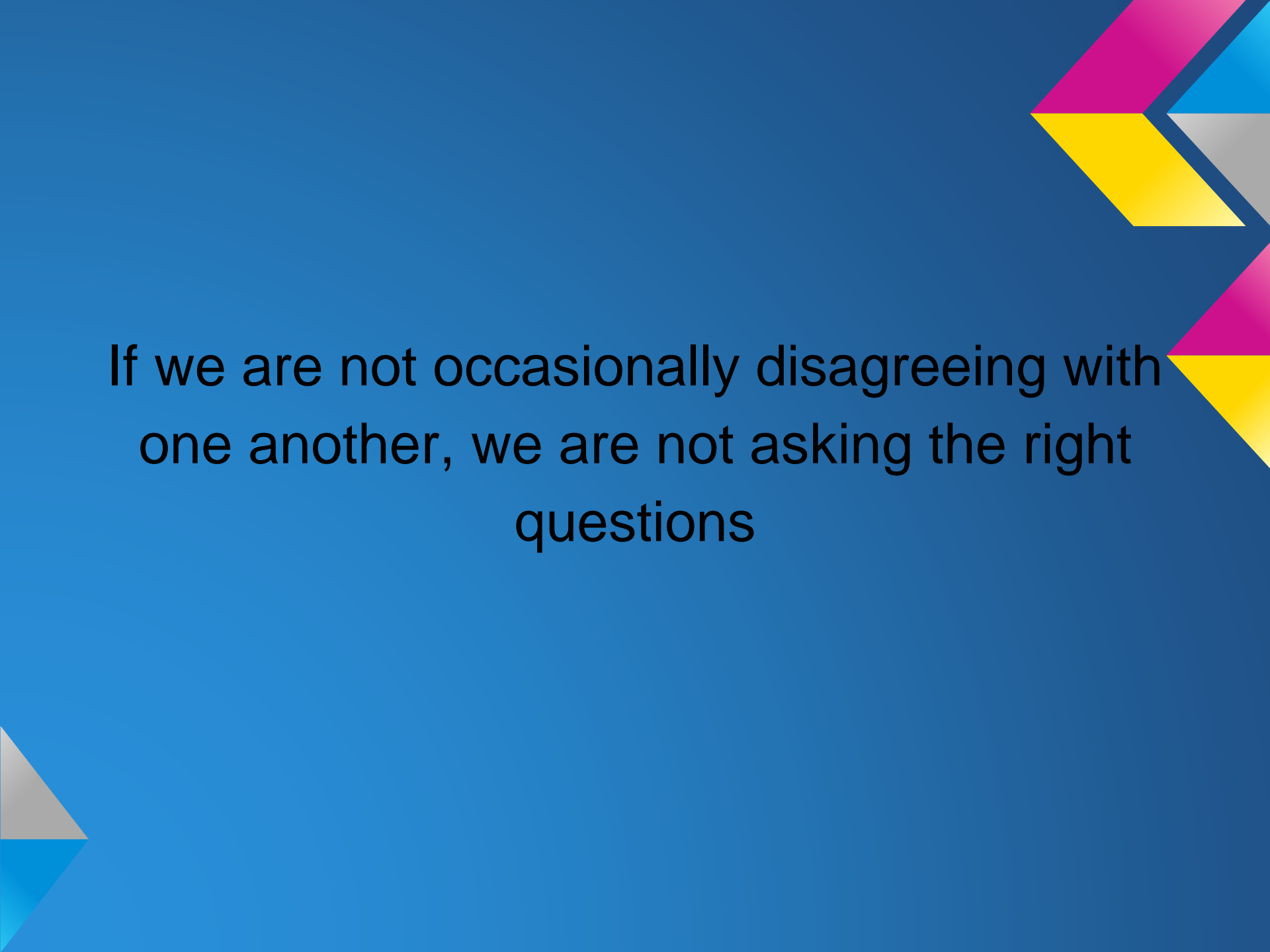
It is not “personal”

Courage

TIME

Social interest

Embrace conflict

The slide features a solid blue background. In the top right corner, there is a cluster of overlapping geometric shapes in magenta, yellow, and light blue. In the bottom left corner, there is a smaller cluster of overlapping shapes in light blue and white.

If we are not occasionally disagreeing with
one another, we are not asking the right
questions

Multicultural Competencies

- Awareness
- Knowledge
 - Skills
- Relationship

AWARENESS

Savage Chickens

by Doug Savage



Common Myths

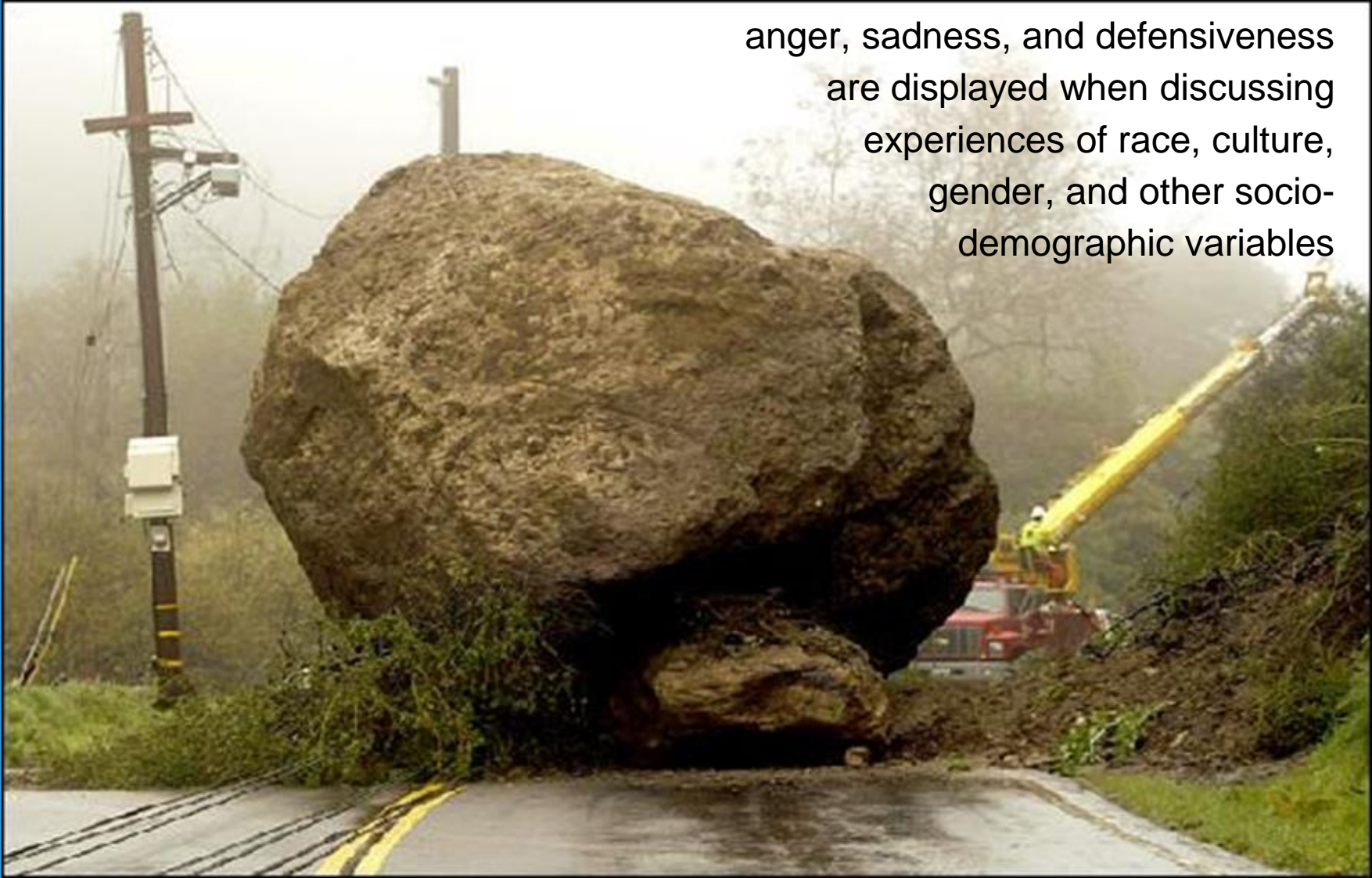
- Colorblindness
- Tolerance
- Liberal ideas
- It is learning about “others”
- It is easy/ difficult
- “Super”competence
- “I will refer”

As long as you think you're green, you'll grow. As soon as you think you're ripe, you'll rot. (Scott Horton)



Emotional Roadblocks

anger, sadness, and defensiveness
are displayed when discussing
experiences of race, culture,
gender, and other socio-
demographic variables



Misconception about 'Social Justice'

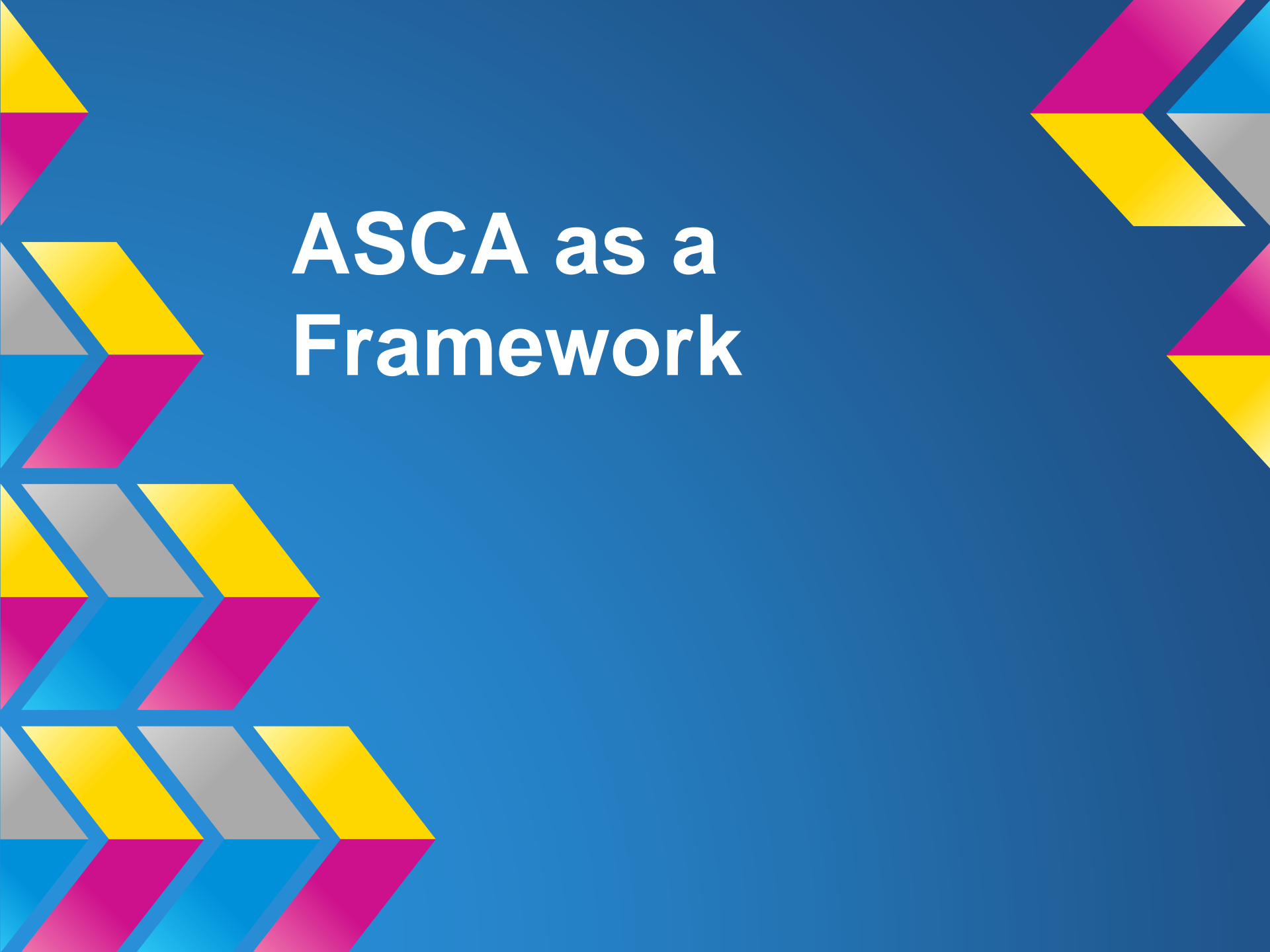
- Female friend says my salary is $\frac{1}{3}$ of my male colleague. How would you feel?
- Then you are a social justice advocate.

What is it then?

- The deliberate act of promoting equity, access, participation, and harmony to eliminate environmental and individual injustices
- Acknowledges issues of power, privilege, and oppression
- Addresses social, political, economic and cultural conditions that impact students academic, career, and personal development

Strategies???

- use political savvy to navigate power structures
- consciousness raising
- initiate difficult dialogues
- Build intentional relationships
- Teaching students self-advocacy skills
- Use data
- Educate others about the school counseling role as an advocate

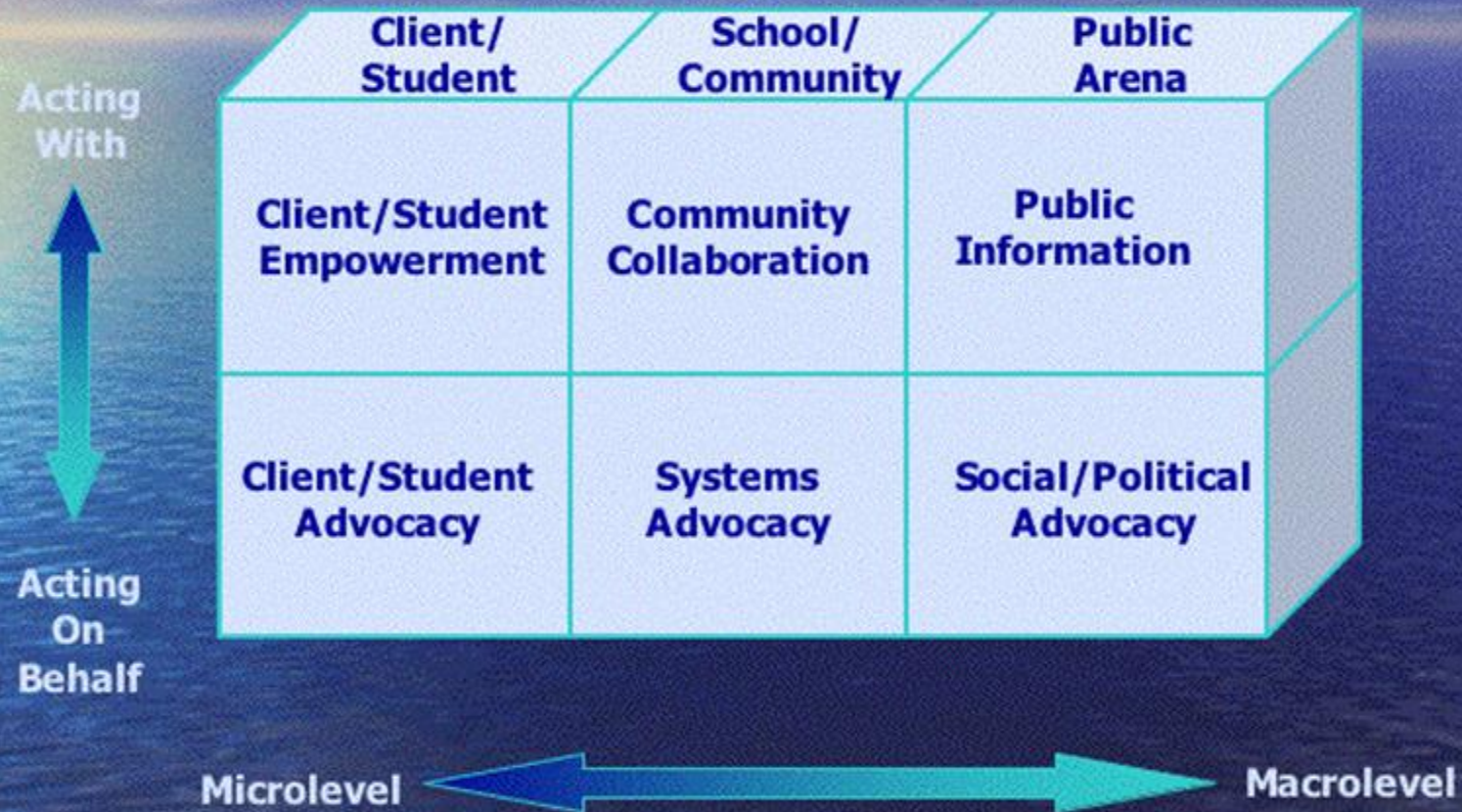
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ASCA as a Framework

What does social justice look like in Iowa?

- Gender
- Race
- SES
- Faith/religion
- Sexual orientation
- School setting (urban/suburban/rural)
- Culture
- Immigration status

Advocacy Competency Domains



School Counseling and The Achievement Gap

“We’re doing all we can.”

The achievement gap: groups of students with relatively equal ability don’t achieve in school at the same levels. In fact, one group often far exceeds the achievement level of another.

Gaps exist between groups (not exhaustive):

- Gender

- Socioeconomic status

- School setting

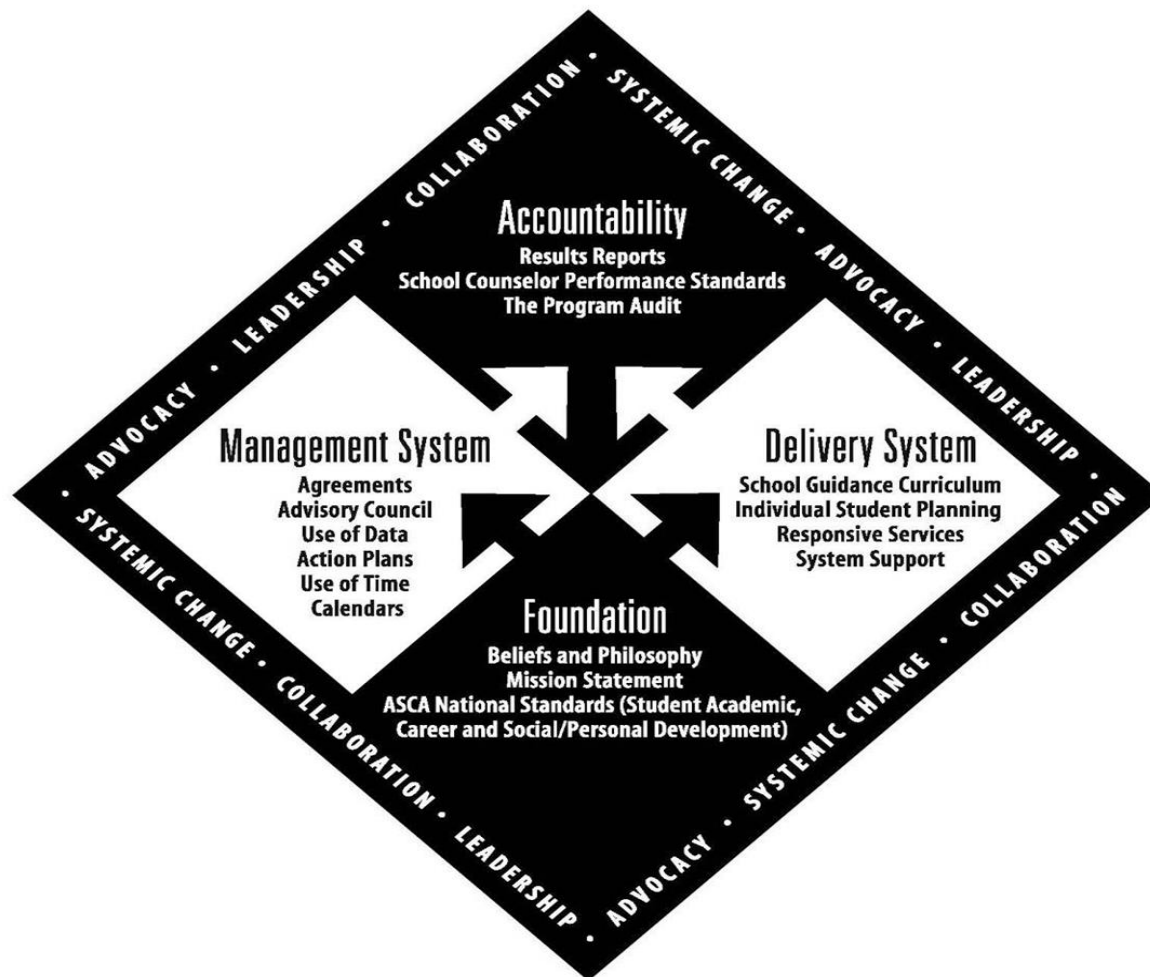
- Race

Low educational achievement is associated with high unemployment, lower earnings, higher crime, and a greater dependency on welfare and other social services.

(Holcomb-McCoy, 2007)

Barriers to Advocacy

- Belief that we need to know more and we'll learn it... someday
- Wearing too many hats
- Intimidation
- Survival mode



Social Justice Advocacy in School Counseling

School Counseling Using a Social Justice Approach:

- Counseling and Intervention Planning
- Consulting
 - Connecting Schools, Families and Communities
- Collecting and Using Data
- Challenging Bias
- Coordinating Student Services and Support

(Holcomb-McCoy, 2007)

Enacting Change

Building Intentional Relationships

“For me, the relationship is key. There's not much you can do without having a solid relationship with ... just about anybody in the organization. And for training purposes, I think that I would suggest that ... school counselor educators focus on encouraging the school counselors to have positive working relationships with principals, administrators, and even district people. Before you can really get anything done, you have to make sure that someone's willing to hear you out. That is the first step in working toward some sort of social change.” - Simore

(Singh et al., 2010)

Counseling and Intervention Planning

Acknowledge and integrate students' cultural and familial issues in counseling intervention implementation.

Action Steps:

Use a Person-in-Environment approach:

- Background experiences
- Interaction with others in her/his family & community
- Resources available
- Adaptive & maladaptive interactions with other people
- Particular cultural values

(Holcomb-McCoy, 2007)

Counseling Snapshot: Counseling and Intervention Planning

“Jameel is an 8th grader, an African American and an honors student at Frederick Douglass Middle School. Because Jameel scored extremely well on gifted and talented tests, he’s been selected to attend a special 3 week camp. Jameel is not excited about attending and tells you that he doesn’t want to go. He is concerned about what his friends will say about him going to a camp with a ‘bunch of white boys’.”

Now what?

(Holcomb-McCoy, 2007)

Consultation

Consultation can be used to influence change in an entire classroom, school or family.

Action Steps:

Advocate for students who are being treated unfairly or are unable to speak for themselves

- Identify inequities during the consultation process
- Maintain ongoing consultation with teachers & community to educate about how to best support all students
- Pay attention to cross-cultural nature of student-to-teacher interactions
- Pay attention to teacher and family self-awareness in consultation

(Holcomb-McCoy, 2007)

Counseling Snapshot: Consultation

“You notice that a young female teacher is sending at least one Latino male student to the office every day for discipline purposes.”

Now what?

(Holcomb-McCoy, 2007)

Connecting Schools, Families, and Communities

School-family-community partnerships have proven to be effective in raising the test scores of culturally and linguistically diverse and low income students.

Action Steps:

To the extent able, spend time listening and working in partnership with the community and families of students to improve services offered in school.

- Be flexible and collaborative.

- Promote an understanding of the impact of oppression on students' psychological and educational development.

(Holcomb-McCoy, 2007)

Counseling Snapshot: Connecting Schools, Families, and Communities

“A middle school’s community has experienced a series of hate crimes targeting gay couples in one of its neighborhoods. The hate crimes have caused many students and families to fear coming into the school. Many families worry that their children may get hurt.”

Now what?

(Holcomb-McCoy, 2007)

Collecting and Using Data

Data collection increases our ability to monitor student progress and to understand which students may need an intervention. It can better highlight social injustices and advocate for students and families.

Action Steps:

Collect, analyze and present:

Data:

Disaggregated by:

- student test scores
- attendance
- race
- dropout rates
- graduation rates
- immigration status
- suspension
- income status
- expulsion
- gender
- grades
- grade
-
- cultural specification
-
-
-
-
- ability

Counseling Snapshot: Collecting and Using Data

“You collect data indicating that 12% of 11th grade students drop out before graduation. Further analysis showed that those who dropped out were primarily made up of African American and Latino females: 42% of the students who drop out are African American females and 50% are Latino females.”

Now what?

(Holcomb-McCoy, 2007)

Challenging Bias

Bias and prejudice can inhibit student achievement and influence the behavior and perceptions of educators.

Action Steps:

- Must be diligent about identifying and challenging our own biases and those of others
- Understand that social justice dialogues are often ongoing and require patience, courage, and understanding of intense emotions such as anger and fear
- Help to shape new policies that eliminate biased or oppressive practices
- Incorporate social justice education into the work that we do with students as a means of challenging their biases (Teaching Tolerance)

(Holcomb-McCoy, 2007)

Counseling Snapshot: Challenging Bias

“You are a member of the site-based leadership team at your school. During the selection process of a parent/guardian committee member, several committee members mentioned that the committee should choose a parent/guardian who is a stay-at-home mother because she would be available for meetings and would understand the mission of the school.”

Now what?

(Holcomb-McCoy, 2007)

Coordinating Student Services

Low SES and ethnically diverse students all too often encounter watered down curricula and unchallenging academic environments.

Action Steps:

- Advocate for all students to have access to classes, activities and programs that would further advance their potential for attending college and other opportunities.
- Collaborate with organizations and institutions to provide extra supports for students' academic and emotional development.


(Holcomb-McCoy, 2007)

Counseling Snapshot: Coordinating Student Services

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As a rural high school counselor, you notice a need to provide more advanced career and college preparation for your students. You have limited resources available to you.

Now what? What barriers might students face? How will you work to remove them?

The bottom left corner of the slide features a series of overlapping, stylized geometric shapes. These include a large grey triangle pointing right, a smaller blue triangle pointing right, and a yellow triangle pointing right. These shapes are arranged in a way that they appear to be part of a larger, abstract design.

Enacting Change

(a) using political savvy to navigate power structures, (b) consciousness raising, (c) initiating difficult dialogues, (d) building intentional relationships, (e) teaching students self-advocacy skills, (f) using data for marketing, and (g) educating others about the school counselor role of advocate.

Teaching students self-advocacy skills:

“I want to be part of a change process that allows students to advocate for themselves, to choose their identity, to be self-determining ... and to help them understand how education can be part of their freedom ... a part of the process of getting toward the freedom that they desire for themselves.” -Kim

(Singh et al., 2010)

Using Data for Marketing



Results report:

https://docs.google.com/a/ames.k12.ia.us/document/d/1Jy2QcpNrIBOrCLzxjQ8FI44UKSQA_KL8UiPbZkzYB6A/edit

(Singh et al., 2010)



Educating Others about School Counselor's Role as Advocate

“A lot of people I work with hang on to the idea of the traditional guidance counselor who sits at a desk and is not part of the whole system but is just sort of peripheral. So, I have to help not only the principals, but teachers too, see the connections between academic performance and developmental issues, social issues, emotional issues and realizing that you can't just attend to one of these areas without the others —that they're intertwined and social justice is an integral part of all these areas.” -Samantha

(Singh et al., 2010)

What type of advocate are you?

Which animal is your favorite? (think yourself as a change agent)

Lion

Chameleon

Eagle

Turtle

Promise

- Wise sage technique
 - What are you taking with you?
 - What are you leaving behind?



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